

# Message from the SR 520 Program Administrator

Hello,

I'm Julie Meredith, Program Administrator of the SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Program. I lead the team working to replace the world's longest floating bridge and rebuild a key urban highway that connects our growing communities and job centers on both sides of Lake Washington. The new SR 520, when completed, will be safer and have more capacity for cars, trucks and buses. What's more, it will be more accessible for bicyclists and pedestrians, and more compatible with neighborhoods along the corridor.

It's a big, complex, multiyear job. This newsletter recaps our progress over the past year and looks ahead to what's in store for 2015 and beyond. We made tremendous headway in 2014. Last month, Gov. Inslee and Transportation Secretary Peterson joined us to celebrate the new SR 520 improvements from I-405 to Lake Washington. The Eastside's widened, six-lane corridor now has HOV lanes in both directions, along with direct-access ramps for buses and carpools to move more safely and quickly on and off the highway. This segment also features the first leg of what will eventually be a new bicycle and pedestrian path from Seattle to Bellevue, with connections to other local and regional shared-use trails.

On the lake last year, we permanently anchored and bolted together half of the new SR 520 floating bridge's massive concrete pontoons. You'll see joined pontoons stretch even farther across Lake Washington in 2015 as we move toward a 2016 opening of the new bridge. And speaking of pontoons, we constructed 28 more of them in 2014. The final three of the new bridge's 77 pontoons are now under construction in Aberdeen.

In this newsletter you'll find more construction highlights, such as last September's start of construction on a seismically stronger west approach bridge to link Seattle with the new floating bridge. You'll also read that we recently updated the designs for SR 520's Portage Bay Bridge and the other still-unfunded structures between Lake Washington and I-5 – the "Rest of the West."

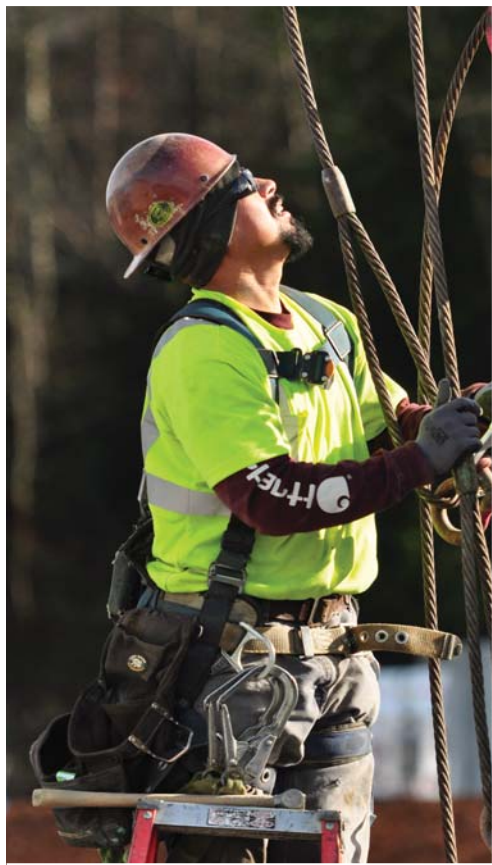
SR 520 is your highway, so I hope you'll spend a few minutes reading this newsletter to see what WSDOT and our contractors are doing to build a safer, more functional, more sustainable transportation system for the region. This newsletter is part of our commitment to keeping you informed about our work. I look forward to sharing more news with you on the road ahead.


Happy New Year!

*Julie Meredith*



**Julie Meredith, P.E.**  
SR 520 Program Administrator






**Bridge Replacement  
and HOV Program**

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**2014  
YEAR IN  
REVIEW**

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**Washington State  
Department of Transportation**





# 2014 Timeline



## WINTER

### JANUARY 2014:

- Seattle Design Commission unanimously endorses final design for West Approach Bridge North

### FEBRUARY 2014:

- New overpass at 108th Ave NE in Bellevue completed; SR 520 shifts onto new structure

## SPRING

### MARCH 2014:

- First pontoon at west end of new floating bridge is anchored in final location
- Two new pontoons towed to Lake Washington; 32 pontoons now on the lake

### APRIL 2014:

- Six more pontoons completed in Aberdeen
- Floating bridge begins to grow as first two longitudinal pontoons are joined together

### MAY 2014:

- Salmon habitat restoration project begins on south Lake Washington; it's one of 15 SR 520 environmental mitigation projects planned in region

## SUMMER

### JUNE 2014:

- 84th Ave NE roundabout interchange opens on Eastside
- SR 520 median transit stop opens at Evergreen Point Road in Medina
- WSDOT completes crack repairs to four Cycle 1 pontoons

### JULY 2014:

- 92nd Ave NE median transit stop opens on Eastside
- Direct-access ramps at 108th Ave NE in Bellevue open for buses and carpools

## FALL

### SEPTEMBER 2014:

- West Connection Bridge is completed near Seattle
- New Eastside HOV lanes open between Bellevue and Medina
- Six more pontoons are completed in Aberdeen
- WSDOT unveils refined designs for SR 520's unfunded "Rest of the West" segment in Seattle

### OCTOBER 2014:

- Gov. Inslee and others celebrate West Approach Bridge North groundbreaking as construction picks up in Seattle
- Permanently joined pontoons for new floating bridge reach halfway point on Lake Washington

### NOVEMBER 2014:

- Tacoma pontoon construction completed; 74 of 77 bridge pontoons now built

## WINTER

### DECEMBER 2014:

- Gov. Inslee, Transportation Secretary Peterson and SR 520 construction workers celebrate imminent completion of Eastside Transit and HOV Project

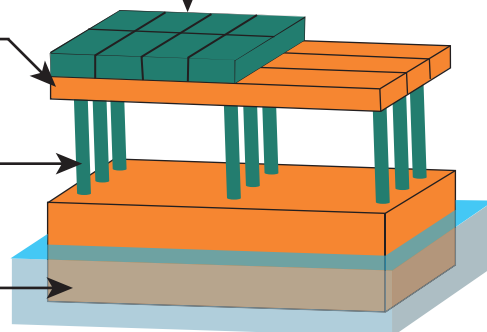
## SR 520: By the numbers

**401** roadway deck panels  
built to date (of **776** needed)

**306** girders  
built to date (of **331** needed)

**361** columns  
built to date (of **772** needed)

**74** pontoons  
built to date (of **77** needed)



New SR 520 floating bridge

WSDOT communicated with **3,289** individuals in 2014 via email, phone, events and public meetings

**9,899** subscribers to our online newsletter

**46,838** households mailed in 2014

**987,000** Twitter impressions in 2014

On the Eastside corridor we opened

**2** new transit stops, **3** new lidded overpasses, **2** new bus/carpool lanes ...



... and **2.2** miles of the new bike and pedestrian path

## What's next in 2015

**Rest of the West:** After significant collaboration with the city of Seattle and community stakeholders, WSDOT will present the Legislature with refined designs and updated cost estimates for completing the planned but not-yet-funded SR 520 improvements from I-5 to Lake Washington.

**Final pontoon construction:** Crews in Aberdeen will finish building the last three pontoons of 77 needed to support the new floating bridge.

**Floating bridge assembly:** Workers on Lake Washington will continue anchoring pontoons into their final position and bolting them together, and atop the pontoons, forming concrete columns and installing roadway deck. In addition, the old floating bridge's drawspan will permanently close, meaning no more 30-minute drawspan delays for drivers. By year's end, assembly of the new floating bridge should be in the home stretch for a planned spring 2016 bridge opening.

**Upgrades to the Montlake Boulevard interchange:** Crews will finish removing the never-completed R.H. Thomson "Ramps to Nowhere" near the Arboretum, then build new westbound off-ramps to Montlake Boulevard and 24th Avenue East as part of the West Approach Bridge North Project.



Rendering of Montlake Boulevard lid with multimodal connections.